

FWP COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET

Meeting Date: June 9, 2011

Agenda Item: Transfer of additional Milltown land parcels. _____

Division: Parks

Action Needed:

☒ **Approval of Tentative Rule**

☐ **Approval of Final Rule/Action**

☐ **Endorse Course of Action**

☐ **None - information only**

Time Needed on Agenda for this Presentation: 10 min

Background

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) proposes to accept the transfer of three parcels of land totaling approximately 465 acres to develop a State Park at the current Milltown Superfund Site at the Confluence of the Clark Fork and Blackfoot Rivers in Missoula County. For the last eight years, a broad-based citizens' group, the Milltown Superfund Redevelopment Working Group, has collaborated with FWP to develop a conceptual design plan for the park. FWP acceptance of the land would represent the next phase of park establishment.

Under the proposal and on the attached map, FWP would accept three parcels, two currently owned by the State of Montana and third from a local land trust. **Parcel A** is the former Northwestern Energy property (approximately 416 acres). As a result of the Superfund cleanup, it was acquired by the State of Montana in December of 2010 and includes the reconstructed floodplain of the Clark Fork River as well as the lower Blackfoot River. The area is managed by the State's Natural Resource Damage Program (NRDP). **Parcel B**, the Milltown Bluff property (approximately 13.6 acres), is located on the south side of the Clark Fork River above the former dam site. The land was acquired by the State of Montana in February 2011 and is currently managed by the Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). **Parcel C** is the Jacobs property (approximately 35 acres) located to the east of Deer Creek County Road. In 2010, Five Valleys Land Trust (FVLT) purchased a privately held parcel adjacent to the proposed park site to provide a critical access point and trail link. FVLT would donate the land to FWP for inclusion in the park with support from Missoula County.

FWP would pursue fee title to the three parcels, though NRDP would retain management authority for Parcel A until the state's river restoration work is complete. Any future development of park facilities on these parcels would be described in subsequent Environmental Assessments.

Public Involvement Process & Results

If approved by the Commission, an Environmental Assessment on the land transfer would be written and distributed for public comment.

Alternatives and Analysis No Action Alternative:

FWP would not accept the land and the agency would not proceed with park development at Milltown. Properties owned by the State of Montana would remain under the management of the NRDP and DEQ, or other agency. Five Valleys Land Trust would likely pursue another buyer for the Jacobs property.

Agency Recommendation & Rationale

FWP recommends approval by the Commission to proceed with the transfer of approximately 465 acres.

Proposed Motion

"I move that the Department proceed with the proposed transfer of the three Milltown parcels as the next phase for establishing Milltown State Park."